



**Anne Arundel County Public Schools**  
**Office of Environmental Literacy and Outdoor Education**

Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Road, Millersville, MD 21108; 410-222-3822  
[www.arlingtonecho.org](http://www.arlingtonecho.org); [www.facebook.com/ArlingtonEcho](https://www.facebook.com/ArlingtonEcho); <https://twitter.com/AEchoEnvEd> AACPS

*Our Mission: To empower students of all ages through authentic hands-on outdoor experiences with the environmental knowledge, skills, and motivation to make and act upon responsible environmental decisions.*



**F**irst graders in Anne Arundel County Public Schools kick off their school year with an exciting environmental literacy unit on Monarch butterflies. Ten full days of instruction are devoted to multidisciplinary Monarch discovery. When spring comes, students maintain their schoolyard gardens for new Monarch visitors.

***Making Standards Come to Life***

In September, students bring Monarch caterpillars into the classroom from their schoolyard gardens, observe the Monarch life cycle, test the caterpillars' food preferences, learn about the Monarch's need for milkweed, record how caterpillars use their body parts to survive, and describe how caterpillars change into adults. These activities bring the Next Generation Science Standards and environmental literacy standards to life.

As students explore the epic North American migration of the Monarch butterfly and the impact of human activity on Monarch populations throughout their range, students learn map skills and other social studies content.

Throughout the unit, Monarchs rule! Math, reading, and writing all build on the Monarch theme. Students make Monarch connections with music and visual arts, too.

***Making a Difference for Monarch Butterflies***

Students take action to help Monarch butterflies by tagging the adult Monarch butterflies before releasing them. In this way, students contribute to research and conservation efforts on behalf of this amazing insect.

In the spring, students remove weeds and old growth from their schoolyard Monarch gardens, making way for new milkweed and native nectar plants, rolling out the welcome mat for Monarch butterflies making the journey north.



**ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
ELEVATING ALL STUDENTS... ELIMINATING ALL GAPS